

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows, this listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A sealing structure for an inflow opening of a blower housing, the blower housing being associated with a centrifugal blower wheel, the centrifugal blower wheel and an inner side of the blower housing defining an air gap therebetween, the sealing structure comprising:

a sealing ring; and

a buffer part connected to said sealing ring, said buffer part shaped to surround the inflow opening of the blower housing in a sealing manner; and

said sealing ring and said buffer part adapted to be disposed in the inflow opening to substantially fill the air gap between the centrifugal blower wheel and the inner side of the blower housing and to protrude from the blower housing;

said sealing ring has a given elasticity; and

said buffer part has a clearance setting an elasticity thereof to be different from said given elasticity.

2. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said buffer part has an outer contour adapted to an inner contour of an opening to be sealed.

3. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said sealing ring is of a material suitable for grinding in by the centrifugal blower wheel when said sealing ring is in an installed position on the blower housing.

4. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said buffer part is of an elastic material.

5. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said sealing ring and said buffer part are formed as a one-piece body and from one material.

6. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said sealing ring and said buffer part are integral.

7. (Currently amended) ~~The device according to claim 1,~~ A sealing structure for an inflow opening of a blower housing, the blower housing being associated with a centrifugal blower wheel, the centrifugal blower wheel and an inner side of the blower housing defining an air gap therebetween, the sealing structure comprising:

a sealing ring; and

a buffer part connected to said sealing ring, said buffer part shaped to surround the inflow opening of the blower housing in a sealing manner; and

said sealing ring and said buffer part adapted to be disposed in the inflow opening to substantially fill the air gap between the centrifugal blower wheel and the inner side of the blower housing and to protrude from the blower housing; and

wherein said buffer part tapers conically at a portion to be disposed outside the inflow opening.

8. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said sealing ring and said buffer part are of material having a hardness of between approximately 40 Shore and approximately 50 Shore.

9. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said sealing ring and said buffer part are of material having a strength of between approximately 10 N/mm² and approximately 20 N/mm².

10. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said sealing ring and said buffer part are of material having an elasticity of between approximately 40% and approximately 60%.

11. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said sealing ring and said buffer part are of material that can elongate to between approximately 150% to approximately 300%.

12. (Original) The device according to claim 8, wherein said material maintains said hardness even after ageing under operating conditions in a floor-treating appliance with continuous vibrational loading and elevated temperatures.

13. (Original) The device according to claim 9, wherein said material maintains said strength even after ageing under operating conditions in a floor-treating appliance with continuous vibrational loading and elevated temperatures.

14. (Original) The device according to claim 10, wherein said material maintains said elasticity even after ageing under operating conditions in a floor-treating appliance with continuous vibrational loading and elevated temperatures.

15. (Original) The device according to claim 11, wherein said material maintains said elongatability even after ageing under operating conditions in a floor-treating appliance with continuous vibrational loading and elevated temperatures.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently amended) The device according to ~~claim 16~~ claim 1, wherein said clearance is a plurality of clearances in the form of approximately equidistant blind holes.

18. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said sealing ring is of an elastic material and is to be slipped by the centrifugal blower wheel when said sealing ring is on the blower housing in an installed position.

Claims 19-20 (Canceled)

21. (New) A vacuum cleaner comprising:
a housing enclosing a suction chamber and a motor compartment;
a dividing wall separating the suction chamber from the motor compartment and including an air-directing funnel;
an electric motor disposed within the motor compartment;
a centrifugal blower wheel rotationally driven by the motor;
a blower housing having a inflow opening and an inner side and being configured to form a directed air stream, said blower housing surrounding said centrifugal blower wheel, said centrifugal blower wheel and said inner side of said blower housing defining an air gap therebetween; and
a seal body having an inner sealing ring surrounding the inflow opening and a buffer part extending radially outwardly from the sealing ring toward an outer periphery, the seal body forming a seal between the blower housing and the dividing wall and the seal body being disposed in the inflow opening and substantially filling said air gap between the centrifugal blower wheel and the inner side of said blower housing.

22. (New) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 21, wherein the sealing ring forms a bearing location at least partially supporting the motor and blower housing within the housing.

23. (New) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 21, wherein the seal body includes a radial incision extending into the seal body in an axial direction between the sealing ring and the buffer part and receiving an edge of the blower housing.

24. (New) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 21, wherein the seal body is formed from an elastic material, the sealing ring having a first elasticity value, the buffer part having a second elasticity value being different than the first elasticity value.

25. (New) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 21, wherein the buffer part includes a plurality of clearance recesses influencing the second elasticity value of the buffer part.

26. (New) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 21, wherein the sealing ring and the buffer part are formed as a one-piece body from one material.